

ABSTRACT

Title: Packaging System

A packaging system for packaging a plurality of individual articles into packs and for collecting together a plurality of packs into a packaged unit, the system including a first part where the individual articles are marked utilising a first marking apparatus, a second part where the packs are marked utilising a second marking apparatus, and a third part where the packaged unit is marked utilising a third marking apparatus, and the first part including a packing apparatus for packing the articles into packs and first conveyor for moving the packs from the first part to the second part, and the second part including second conveyor for conveying the packs from the second to the third system part, and the third part including a packaging apparatus which collects the plurality of packs into a packaging unit, wherein each of the first, second and third marking apparatus, and the packaging apparatus which collects the plurality of packs into a packaged unit are connected to a data bus by respective connectors, there being a controller also connected to the data bus, the controller sending appropriately addressed data bus commands on the data bus to each of the connected components, the data bus commands all using a common computer protocol, and each of the connections of the connected components being capable of translating data bus commands appropriate to that component into a command protocol which is read by the connected component which responds by performing a productive function, whereby the controller means is able to control each of the connected components independent of command protocols recognised by the connected components.

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